



DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

CREEKSIDE GENEVEE, B, FD,
BI , FLOWER OF THE YEAR

Volume 4, Issue 4

April 2006

WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG

TUBER SALE TUBER SALE TUBER SALE

April is here, the weather is beautiful and we are getting that itchy feeling of wanting to plant those dahlias and get them growing. First though, we have a great opportunity to purchase some great tubers grown by our members here in Atlanta and surrounding areas that are heat tolerant and will grow well here. The sale/

auction will be held in the Exhibit Hall at the Atlanta Botanical Garden.



2005 TUBER SALE ACTION

All types of dahlias will be available from 12" dinner plate types, to beautiful waterlily, balls, opened centered types, to 2" pom pom types. Every form will be available including formal decorative, informal decorative, cactus, semi-cactus, laciniated and stellar. Free growing guides will be available as will members be available to answer your planting & growing questions. Come and enjoy the fun of our April tuber sale and purchase some great tubers for your garden.

DAHLIAS - APRIL -planting time approaches but.....

We find ourselves in the early part of April, being racked by torrential rains and thunder storms one day, to be followed by absolutely gorgeous, perfect days. But, beware to those who want to plant dahlias now. Hold off until May. The current soil temperature shows a reading of 40- 50 degrees. Remember, dahlias like (CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

2006 ANNUAL CALENDAR

- APRIL TUBER SALE, APR 17, ABG
- MAY TUBER SALE, MAY 15, ABG
- JUNE MEETING, JUNE 19, ABG
- JULY , ANNUAL PICNIC, JULY 29
- AUGUST MEETING, AUG 21, ABG
- CAROLINAS DAHLIA SHOW UNC ABORETUM, ASHEVILLE-SEPT 9 & 10
- NATIONAL DAHLIA SOCIETY DAHLIA SHOW, LONG ISLAND, NY SEPTEMBER 14-17
- TENNESSEE DAHLIA SHOW, CHATTANOOGA TRADE & CONVENTION CENTER, CHATTA NOOGA, SEP 23 & 24
- GEORGIA DAHLIA SHOW, ATLANTA BOTANICALGARDEN, ATLANTA, GA SEPT 30 & OCT 1
- ALABAMA DAHLIA SHOW, MCWANE SCENCE CENTER, BIRMINGHAM, AL OCT 7
- GA NAT'L FAIR DAHLIA SHOW, PERRY, GA OCTOBER 11-13
- OCTOBER MEETING, MINI DAHLIA SHOW, OCT 16, ABG
- NOV MEETING, NOV 20, ABG
- CHRISTMAS PARTY– DEC, TBA

THE CALENDAR HAS TWO CHANGES.
THE DATE OF THE PICNIC & THE LOCATION OF THE TENNESSEE SHOW

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

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WE ARE SO GLAD TO HAVE EACH OF YOU AS NEW MEMBERS OF THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA.

TERRI & BRITTANY BEAVERS

ELLIJAY, GEORGIA

JOYCE BROOME

NORCROSS, GEORGIA

FRED & WILMA ESPY

DECATUR, GEORGIA

DR. EZEKIEL KENNEDY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

ANGELA ROBINSON

RIVERDALE, GEORGIA

MARY SAINT-JOHN

YELLVILLE, ARKANSAS

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

The DS of Georgia would like to offer our deepest sympathy to Linda & Brian Killingsworth on the loss of their daughter Amanda (Mandy) Killingsworth on March 27th. Mandy was a young (31) and vibrant young lady and was always willing to help her dad and the Society in getting ready & closing our show each year. She will be missed by all.

The Dahlia Society would also like to offer our deepest sympathy to Gene & Joy Boeke on the loss of Gene's stepmother and Society member, Bessie Boeke, who passed away on March 18th. Bessie loved flowers and lived a rich and long life of 97 years.

IS IT TOO LATE? NO

YOU CAN STILL JOIN THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA FOR 2006 IF YOU HAVEN'T RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER. AS A MEMBER YOU BELONG TO ONE OF THE MOST DYNAMIC FLOWER SOCIETIES IN ATLANTA OR GEORGIA. JUST SEND YOUR DUES TO HENRY EVERETT OR JOIN AT OUR APRIL TUBER SALE.



CAMANO MESSENGER, A, IC, LB, PK/Y

THIS BEAUTIFUL CACTUS DAHLIA WILL BE AVAILABLE AT OUR TUBER SALES THIS YEAR.



WILDWOOD MARIE WL, DP

A BEAUTIFUL WATERLILY DAHLIA

LOOK FOR IT AT THE TUBER SALE

MEMBERS BRINGING TUBERS

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Members please bring as many of your tubers as you can to the sale/auction on the 17th. We need as many tubers as we can get as we are expecting a large number of people for the sale.

If you haven't dug them yet now is the time to dig and divide them. I have dug a few this week and they usually have eyes showing which make them very easy to divide and get ready for the sale. Make sure you let them air dry for 24 hours before putting them away for the sale or for planting later. Also, put them in a warm room so more growing tips will pop out.

Those dahlias you bring to the sale must be **divided**, have at least **one visible growing tip**, must be **listed in the Dahlia Classification Book**, and **identified by name with the name written on the tuber or on a tag attached to the tuber**.

Please bring your tubers to the sale early so they can be organized properly for the auction and we can start on time.

We thank each of you in advance for sharing your tubers for the benefit of our

(cont from page 1 APRIL DAHLIA CHORES)

soil temperature at planting time to be about 70 degrees, a lot like tomato plants. Rains have dampened many freshly turned gardens and, in some cases, actually made for slippery conditions So, what can a frustrated, impatient dahlia grower do? Right now!! What to do right now? There are several current tasks that will prove beneficial later in the growing season. Hopefully your garden has already been plowed or tilled at least once this season. If not, as soon as your soil dries sufficiently (a handful of soil squeezed into a ball then crumbles easily), take a sunny day to enjoy being outside and work your soil to at least a 6" depth. Any

available compost or other aged organic material should be worked in at the same time. If you have had the soil tested and the results show a pH reading of below 6.0, casting powdered agricultural lime upon the surface of the freshly worked soil will help sweeten the soil and raise the PH to a more desirable reading of 6.2 – 6.5. Since it takes several months for lime to be incorporated, if your garden needs lime, then don't tarry but apply the lime now!!

Tubers of newly acquired varieties* or favorites left from last year will definitely benefit from being potted in new, fresh potting soil and exposed to light and some water. With the longer days, warmth, light and moisture, they will quickly awaken. They will quickly develop roots within the pot in anticipation of a May planting. You will be amazed to see how much growth occurs, in as little as a month's time, both above and below the soil level in the pot.

I've learned from experience that dahlias or even new cuttings in pots, like about 16 hours of light a day when trying to awaken and produce initial roots. I recommend that you try to move the pots outdoors in the morning, place them in a sunny spot, and return them indoors in the evening. Then supplement their indoor light with any number of artificial light sources to reach a 16

rewarded with abundant roots and very healthy dahlias ready for the planting in May. Perhaps by the last week of April it will be warm enough to leave the dahlias outside and thereby help them begin to harden off in anticipation to May planting. Yet another suggestion for this time of the year is a weekly, light (1/2) strength feeding of a liquid fertilizer; one with a higher middle number (the phosphorous portion) will help develop roots.

Now would be a good time to go ahead and drive your supporting stakes in the ground. Then, when you plant next month, you'll already have a support system to which you can attach any top growth from potted tubers. This top growth may be as much as a foot and will definitely appreciate having the protection of support in the case of any sudden spring storm. I recommend that you use relatively cheap wooden "tomato" staves or 1"

White PVC pipe or ½" rebar rods (either at least 6' long) will see you through the season. If you plan to grow just a few dahlias, then consider installing metal "tomato rings". A 3' space between stakes will allow you to work among your plants as they grow throughout the next 6 or more months.

So, April is here and the glorious time of the year when the outdoors awaken. These several tasks performed in April will greatly benefit your dahlias throughout the following spring, summer and fall.

* An excellent source of heat tolerant dahlias, known to grow in this area, will be available at the April and May auctions. Gene Boeke, our Regional VP for the American Dahlia Society and long time dahlia grower has given me much advice over the years but his best has been, "try everything at least once, then do what works for you".

For all the new members - I know we throw a lot of information your way both in the newsletter and at our meetings. But remember, we too were new to dahlias at one time and a lot of what we suggest may only work in our garden. Something else may be better in your garden. Gene's adage can apply to you, too.

Brian Killingsworth

MORE DAHLIAS FOR THE TUBER SALE



ELMA ELIZABETH A, FD, LAV

GEORGIA DAHLIA HISTORY

The Dahlia Society of Georgia has been around since 1934 and I am sure there have been some large and beautiful dahlia gardens in all parts of Georgia grown by members and non-members alike.

One of the biggest and best of the dahlia growers was Alvin Todd and his wife Zura. They started what was known as Todd's Dahlia Farm in 1929 selling their tubers in the Georgia Farmers Bulletin.

From this humble beginning the Todd Dahlia Farm grew over the years until in the 1960's they were growing 66,000 dahlias each year on their 129 acres in Suches, Georgia just Northwest of Dahlonega and near where the Appalachian Trail goes through the North Georgia Mountains. It is an amazing story of hard work and dedication one worth reading about in detail and can be found at the following website: www.dahliafarm.net/index/history

Those without email I have included a copy of the History of the Todd Dahlia Farm.



INLAND DYNASTY AA, SC, Y



PEACHES N CREAM M, FD, LB OR/W